



JENNIFER M. GRANHOLM
GOVERNOR

STATE OF MICHIGAN
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LANSING

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Granholm Signs Budget Bills to Improve Public Safety, Protect Veterans Services

LANSING – Governor Jennifer M. Granholm signed into law today the fiscal year 2004 appropriations bills for the Departments of State Police and Military and Veterans Affairs. The two budgets, which total over \$560 million, will strengthen public safety and offer vital services to Michigan's veterans.

State Police

As recommended in Governor Granholm's balanced budget proposal, public safety will improve as a result of the first new State Police trooper recruit school since 2000. Senate Bill 277 provides over \$460.9 million, of which \$247.6 million is general fund, to support the critical law enforcement activities of the Michigan State Police.

"With the first State Police trooper recruit school in nearly three years, we are keeping our commitment to the safety of Michigan citizens at a time when we need it most," said Granholm. "Whether it is responding to an accident scene or managing the state's emergency response, our troopers should be commended for their heroism and dedication to Michigan's families."

Among other items, the budget for the State Police:

- provides \$20 million in new Traffic Law Enforcement and Safety Fund support for at-post trooper operations, saving a like amount to the general fund, as well as an additional \$6.3 million from the Highway Safety Fund for the same purpose;
- provides \$5 million in funding support for a trooper school in fiscal year 2004, which is estimated to instruct approximately 100 candidates;
- increases federal funding for the Hazardous Materials Program by \$55 million to reflect anticipated first responder grant awards from the U.S. Department of Justice in conjunction with Homeland Security efforts.

“The funding for a new trooper recruit school will benefit all Michigan citizens,” said Col. Tadarial J. Sturdivant, Director of the Michigan State Police. “The ability to increase our trooper strength will ensure that Michigan remains a state committed to keeping families safe.”

Military and Veterans Affairs

Senate Bill 266 provides over \$103.1 million to support the Department of Military and Veterans Affairs for fiscal year 2004. This bill maintains state funding support of over \$3.9 million for 11 veterans’ service organizations; contains \$1.3 million to continue tuition assistance for National Guard members enrolled at Michigan colleges and universities; provides \$3.3 million for the Michigan Youth Challenge Academy, continuing to serve high school drop-outs between the ages of 16 and 18 and providing life skills and employment potential through military-based training; and contains over \$55.4 million for the operation of the veterans’ homes in Grand Rapids and Marquette, serving over 900 disabled and elderly veterans.

“This budget will allow Michigan to answer the nation’s call to service while preserving the critical programs for our veterans who have already answered the call,” said Granholm.

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